

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5456

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION JIDDA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18677

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,EG,UR,XE

SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS ON FAHMY STATEMENT

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

1. SOVIET PRESS REPORTS OF FAHMY'S STATEMENT ON ME
PEACE CONDITIONS HAVE DELIBERATELY FUZZED HIS CALL
FOR ISRAEL TO "WELCOME ARAFAT'S PROPOSAL OF A
DEMOCRATIC STATE OF PALESTINE IN WHICH MOSLEMS,
CHRISTIANS AND JEWS WOULD LIVE TOGETHER," AND IN A
DELAYED REPORT HAS DROPPED EARLIER TASS REFERENCE TO
HIS CALL FOR ISRAEL TO CEASE IMMIGRATION.

2. ON QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN STATE PAST SYNOPSIS

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OF FAHMY'S INTERVIEW (PRAVDA, DECEMBER 15) AND DELAYED

TASS-IZVESTIYA SUMMARY (IZVESTIYA, DECEMBER 16) REPORT THAT EGYPT PROPOSED THE CREATION OF "A DEMOCRATIC PALESTINIAN STATE OR FULFILLMENT OF THE 1947 UN RESOLUTION ON THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE." NEITHER ACCOUNT ALLUDES TO FAHMY'S REFERENCE TO "ARAFAT'S PROPOSAL" OR HINTS THAT HE SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF A UNIFIED DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE. SOVIET FUZZING THUS IMPLIES THAT THE EGYPTIAN STATEMENT CALLED ONLY FOR THE CREATION OF "A" PALESTINIAN STATE AND WAS NOT QUESTIONING THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL.

3. ON THE LOCALLY SENSITIVE IMMIGRATION QUESTION, PRAVDA STORY REPORTED THAT FAHMY SAID "ISRAEL WILL HAVE TO GIVE A DEFINITE PROMISE REGARDING THE CESSATION OF IMMIGRATION." THIS REPORT DID NOT MENTION 50-YEAR TIME LIMIT. SUBSEQUENT IZVESTIYA STORY, ISSUED AFTER ONE-DAY DELAY AND TIME FOR FURTHER THOUGHT, OMITTS ALL REFERENCE TO IMMIGRATION.

4. PRESS HAS TREATED FAHMY'S INTERVIEW WITH CIRCUMSPECTION AND HAS PROVIDED NO DIRECT COMMENT. IZVESTIYA STORY OBLIQUELY OFFERS ASSESSMENT THAT THE STATEMENT HAS NOT STALLED CHANCES FOR PROGRESS TOWARD A ME SETTLEMENT BY REPLAYING WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL REPORTEDLY SAYING THAT FAHMY'S STATEMENT "COINCIDES" WITH EGYPTIAN CONDITIONS FOR A ME SETTLEMENT AND THAT THE EGYPTIANS DO NOT BELIEVE THE CONDITIONS WILL HINDER PROGRESS TOWARD AN AGREEMENT. ARTICLE ALSO OFFERS THE GIST OF TRIBUNU LYUDU AND AL AHRAM EDITORIALS STRESSING ISRAELI RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ME CRISIS BUT OFFERING NO DIRECT ALLUSION TO FAHMY'S REMARKS.

5. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF EMIGRATION LARGE NUMBER SOVIET JEWS TO ISRAEL, FAHMY'S REMARKS OBVIOUSLY STRUCK AN EXTREMELY SENSITIVE CHORD IN MOSCOW, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF UPCOMING BREZHNEV VISIT TO ME. SOVIET DISTORTION OF FAHMY'S INTERVIEW IS CONSISTENT WITH MOSCOW'S UNWILLINGNESS TO PUBLICIZE OR CONDONE EXTREMIST ARAB POSITIONS ON AN ME SETTLEMENT. IN
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THE PRESENT CONTEXT IT MAY ALSO BE A SIGNAL TO CAIRO THAT THE SOVIETS REMAIN COMMITTED TO THEIR AMMOUNCED VIEWS ON A SETTLEMENT AND CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO ACCEPT UNREASONABLE LANGUAGE ON THE ME DURING THE BREZHNEV VISIT.
STOESSEL

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